

VZCZCXYZ0011  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHC #6122 2302058  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O P 182040Z AUG 09  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 0000  
INFO RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0000

S E C R E T STATE 086122

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/05/2034  
TAGS: [ETTC](#) [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [IN](#) [SY](#)  
SUBJECT: (S) SYRIAN MILITARY SEEKS 500 TONS OF EXPLOSIVE  
RDX FROM INDIAN FIRMS

Classified By: SCA DAS Michael Owen for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an action request to Embassy New Delhi.  
Please deliver the points in paragraph 5 as soon as possible.  
These points may be left as a non-paper.

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

¶2. (S/NF) We have information the Syrian military requested 500 tons of explosive nitroamine RDX from the Indian firm Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), and the Indian firm MKU Pvt. Ltd. has also been involved in the discussions. We also have information OFB has invited Syria to send a delegation to India for further discussions. The sheer volume of RDX that Syria's military is contemplating purchasing is of particular concern. We want to request the Government of India to act immediately to terminate this activity.

-----  
BACKGROUND  
-----

¶3. (S/NF) RDX (cyclotrimethylene trinitramine) is a stable, compact, easily transportable, military grade high explosive. More commonly known as semtex, or plastic explosive, RDX is classed as a nitramine, and considered the second most important explosive in the U.S. military inventory, after TNT. Due to its high power for a relatively small volume, RDX is widely used in detonators, claymore mines, and demolition kits. RDX, when it can be obtained by paramilitary, terrorist organizations, or unstable individuals, can be easily used to create improvised explosive devices (IEDs). RDX can also be used as a propellant ingredient in ballistic missile propulsion systems. Because RDX is controlled under both the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), its transfer to Syria would be reportable to the U.S. Congress under the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) and sanctions could be imposed on the Indian entities involved. RDX is also controlled under India's export control regulations Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies (SCOMET).

-----  
ACTION REQUEST/OBJECTIVES  
-----

¶4. (S/NF) Post is requested to approach appropriate host government officials as soon as possible to pursue the following objectives and to deliver the talking points/non-paper in para 5 below:

-- Inform Indian officials we have information the Syrian military requested 500 tons of explosive nitroamine RDX from the Indian firm Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), and the Indian

firm MKU Pvt. Ltd. has also been involved in the discussions.

OFB has invited Syria to send a delegation to India for further discussions.

-- Stress that we are particularly concerned by this activity given OFB's ties with the Ministry of Defense.

-- Ask the Indian government to investigate, share with us the results of its investigation, and act to have these Indian firms immediately terminate this activity.

-- Emphasize to Indian officials that RDX and its derivatives are controlled under both the Wassenaar Arrangement and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), that its transfer would be reportable to the U.S. Congress under the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA), and that INKSNA sanctions could be imposed on the Indian entities involved.

-- Mention RDX is also controlled under India's export control regulations on the SCOMET list.

#### 15. (SECRET/REL INDIA) BEGIN TALKING POINTS

-- In the interest of transparency and enhanced cooperation on nonproliferation matters, we would like to share the following information.

-- We have information that the Syrian military requested 500 tons of explosive nitroamine RDX (cyclotrimethylene trinitramine) from the Indian firm Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), and that the Indian firm MKU Pvt. Ltd. has also been involved in the discussions.

-- We also have information that OFB has invited Syria to send a delegation to India for further discussions.

-- We are particularly concerned by this activity given OFB's ties with the Ministry of Defense.

-- RDX and its derivatives are controlled under section ML8.a.21 of the Wassenaar Arrangement Munitions List.

-- RDX is a stable, compact military grade, high explosive. RDX is classified as a nitramine, and considered the second most important explosive in the U.S. military inventory, after TNT.

-- RDX is commonly known as semtex, or plastic explosive. Due to its very high power for a relatively small volume, RDX is widely used in detonators, claymore mines, and demolition kits. RDX, when it can be obtained by paramilitary, terrorist organizations, or unstable individuals, can easily be used to create very deadly improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The U.S. considers it imperative to maintain strict control on access to this material.

-- RDX can also be used as a propellant ingredient in ballistic missile propulsion systems and is controlled by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

-- RDX is also controlled under India's export control regulations on the SCOMET list.

-- The United States is required under the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) to identify to the U.S. Congress persons and companies who have transferred goods, services or technology controlled by multilateral nonproliferation regimes, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement and the MTCR, to or from Iran, North Korea, or Syria.

-- The transfer of this substance, explosive nitroamine RDX, would be reportable under INKSNA and sanctions could be imposed against the entities involved.

-- Such sanctions would not be targeted at your government, but at the companies responsible for such transfers.

-- We urge you to investigate the activities of these two companies, share with us at your earliest convenience the results of your investigation, and facilitate the immediate termination of this deal with Syria.

-- We look forward to our continued cooperation on this and other related matters.

(IF ASKED)

-- Sanctions that could be imposed under INKSNA include:

a. No department or agency of the United States Government or U.S. company may procure, or enter into any contract or the procurement of any goods, technology, or services from the sanctioned entity;

b. No department or agency of the United States Government may provide any assistance to the sanctioned entity, and the sanctioned entity shall not be eligible to participate in any assistance program of the United States Government;

c. No sales to the sanctioned entity of any item on the United States Munitions List are permitted, and all sales to the sanctioned entity of any defense articles, defense services, or design and construction services under the Arms Export Control Act are terminated; and,

d. No new individual license shall be granted for the transfer to the sanctioned entity of items controlled under the Export Administration Act of 1979 or the Export Administration Regulations, and existing such licenses are suspended.

END TALKING POINTS

-----  
REPORTING REQUIREMENT  
-----

¶6. (U) Post is requested to please report results of its efforts within seven business days following receipt of this cable.

-----  
POINT OF CONTACT  
-----

¶7. (U) ISN/CATR POC is Michael Rolleri  
(RolleriMJ@state.sgov.gov; 202-647-0255).

¶8. (U) Post's assistance is greatly appreciated.  
CLINTON